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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT AU PRINCE 001516

SIPDIS

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SOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/07/2015

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SUBJECT: U.S. TROOPS NEEDED IN HAITI

REF: PAP 1483 (EXDIS)

Classified By: Ambassador James B. Foley, reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

1. (S) SUMMARY: The situation in Haiti has deteriorated to the point that elections, the central element of the transition process, are in jeopardy. MINUSTAH has failed to establish security and stability here. As much as we may pressure the UN and the Brazilians to take the more forceful approach that is needed, I do not believe ultimately they will be up to the task. As I stated in reftel, a temporary deployment of U.S. forces is the only way to secure the elections and a successful transition and to prevent the kind of sustained instability that would provoke a much longer and costlier U.S. military intervention. I outline below the nature and size of mission I believe is needed and urge relevant Washington agencies to consider positively such a limited deployment. END SUMMARY.

#### Mission Justification and Definition

2. (S) The security situation in Haiti has worsened in the past months to a degree that it is severely hampering voter registration and will make campaigning and the actual elections potentially impossible to conduct. Despite the presence of UN forces, key political players are increasingly questioning the possibility of holding elections, and the Fanmi Lavalas party -- whose participation will be key to the credibility of the elections -- have not yet agreed to participate, citing inadequate security. MINUSTAH forces have demonstrated they are not capable of fully managing security for the elections. In addition, deteriorating security conditions have forced the U.S. mission to reduce its personnel at a critical moment.

3. (S) The basic mission would be to augment the UN's provision of security throughout the campaign period and on election days. Adding U.S. forces would enable MINUSTAH to more effectively use its troops and civilian police for electoral security in low-risk places and ensure an overall climate that permits campaigning and a legitimate and credible election to take place. U.S. forces would be based in Port-au-Prince, with the following specific tasks:

-- Election security in Port-au-Prince. Provide a secure environment for election activities in Port-au-Prince "hotspots" including Cite Soleil, BelAir, Fort National and other areas where HNP and MINUSTAH military and police forces are either outmatched (HNP) or ineffective (MINUSTAH). This would involve both static security, e.g. at election sites, and related patrolling.

-- Deployable electoral security force. On short notice, in coordination with MINUSTAH, U.S. forces would provide security for campaign rallies, marches, and other election-related events in Port-au-Prince as well as in major cities outside the capital. U.S. troops would serve essentially as a needed, short-term surge capacity to MINUSTAH forces.

-- Election Day security. This would include tasks such as protection of polling places, secure transportation of election officials, ballots and other election materials, and quick reaction capacity in case of trouble.

4. (S) The U.S. mission would be self-sufficient and independent of MINUSTAH, but linked through an appropriate coordination mechanism. It would be based on a bilateral agreement with the Government of Haiti, which will eagerly welcome such a mission.

#### Size and composition

5. (S) I leave to military experts to determine the exact size and composition, but I envision a minimum of 500 troops and helicopter support, which would allow for periodic short-term deployments as needed outside the capital while maintaining operations in the capital. Force protection and command element/support requirements needed to make such a force self-sustaining would be determined by DOD.  
Duration

6. (S) Ideally, the U.S. mission would have a 150-day

deployment to encompass the entire campaign and election season, which will run from approximately August 1 (the end of voter registration) until after the December 18 second round of parliamentary/presidential elections. If that is not feasible, a 120-day mission beginning September 1 would provide adequate coverage for the bulk of the campaign period and for the actual elections.

FOLEY